

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 NOUAKC 01751 01 OF 02 221625Z

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 OMB-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-07 AID-05 ACDA-07 EA-07

TRSE-00 PC-01 /118 W

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R 221200Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6023

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

USMISSION USUN

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 NOUAKCHOTT 1751

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PORG, EAID, MR

SUBJECT: REDIRECTION OF MAURITANIAN FOREIGN POLICY???

REF: (A) STATE 151222, (B) STATE 157157, (C) STATE 168804,  
(D) NOUAKCHOTT 205, (E) NOUAKCHOTT 1744 (ALL NOTAL)

1. IN COURSE OF SERIES OF LENGTHY AND WIDE-RANGING CONVERSATIONS DURING HIS CONSULTATIONS IN NOUAKCHOTT PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE FOR WASHINGTON JUNE 4, THEN MAURITANIAN AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE TO U.S. MUHAMMAD NASSIM KOCHMAN ASSERTED AND REITERATED THAT PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH AND HIS ADVISERS HAD MADE COMMAND DECISION TO MAKE FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IN DIRECTION, CONTENT, AND STYLE OF MAURITANIAN FOREIGN POLICY AND RELATIONS.

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PAGE 02 NOUAKC 01751 01 OF 02 221625Z

SUBSEQUENT POLISARIO ATTACKS ON NUAACHOTT INSISTENTLY FOCUSED

ATTENTION OF MISSION ON IMMEDIATE AND SHORT TERM. NOW, FIVE WEEKS LATER, WE CAN AT LAST GET BACK TO REFLECTING ON LONGER TERM.

2. AMBASSADOR KOCHMAN ASSERTED TO AMBASSADOR THAT PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH HAS YET TO RECOGNIZE THAT FIRST PRIORITY OF GIRM MUST BE RAPID AND SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN LOT OF MAURITANIAN PEOPLE. THIS IN TURN MAKES MANDATORY A REORDERING OF DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICY PRIORITIES FROM THINGS POLITICAL TO THINGS ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENTAL. ON FOREIGN POLICY SIDE, ACCORDING TO KOCHMAN, DECISION TO REORDER PRIORITIES IMPOSES BOTH A DOWNGRADING OF GIRM'S TRADITIONAL PURSUIT OF THIRD WORLD POLITICAL CAUSES AND A SHIFTING OF PRIMARY FRIENDSHIPS AWAY FROM PROGRESSIVE, "SOCIALIST" LEADERS OF NONALIGNED THIRD WORLD, (WHICH, BECAUSE THEY ARE VIRTUALLY AS POOR AND AS UNDERDEVELOPED AS MAURITANIA, CAN CONTRIBUTE LITTLE KNOWLEDGE AND LESS CAPITAL TO MAURITANIAN DEVELOPMENT) TO RICH, DEVELOPED COUNTRIES OF WEST (WHICH HAVE BOTH TECHNICAL AND MANAGERIAL EXPERTISE AND MONEY WHICH MAURITANIA NEEDS TO RAISE LIVING STANDARDS OF ITS PEOPLE). SPECIFICALLY, MAURITANIA NEEDS AND MUST HAVE TECHNOLOGY AND ASSISTANCE OF US; THEREFORE IT MUST BUILD SOUNDER AND CLOSER RELATIONSHIP WITH US. AGAIN ACCORDING TO KOCHMAN, PRESIDENT AND HIS CLOSEST ADVISERS, RESPONDING TO LOGIC OF THIS ANALYSIS, DECIDED FINALLY IN LATE FEBRUARY TO REDIRECT THRUST OF THEIR DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICIES, AND SET ABOUT STEP-BY-STEP ACTUAL REDIRECTION OF GOVERNMENTAL DECISIONS AND ACTIONS.

3. AMBASSADOR KOCHMAN, IN HIS TYPICALLY MODEST AND SELF-DEPRECATORY FASHION, THEN ASSERTED THAT SENSIBLE, PRAGMATIC, EFFECTIVE, NEW POLICY ADOPTED BY GIRM IS POLICY WHICH HE HAS BEEN ADVOCATING FOR PAST FIVE OR SIX YEARS AND PRESSING HIS OLD AND INTIMATE FRIENDS PRESIDENT AND MADAME OULD DADDAH TO ADOPT. FACT THAT HIS OLD LAW SCHOOL CLASSMATE HAS CHOSEN HIM TO BE AMBASSADOR TO US AND TO PLAY KEY ROLE IN DEVELOPING PRODUCTIVE NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH US DEMONSTRATES CONCLUSIVELY THAT PRESIDENT HAS NOW COME AROUND TO KOCHMAN'S WELL-KNOWN AND OFT-ARTICULATED ANALYSIS

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PAGE 03 NOUAKC 01751 01 OF 02 221625Z

OF WORLD POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SCENE, OF MAURITANIA'S GOALS AND ROLE, AND OF STEPS TO TAKE TO GET FROM HERE TO THERE. NEW ENVOY THEN CAUTIONED THAT PRESIDENT COULD NOT, FOR READILY APPARENT DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL POLICY REASONS: MAKE PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF REDIRECTION DECISION NOR SET ABOUT WITH PUBLIC FANFARE TO CARRY IT OUT. IN ORDER TO BRING MAXIMUM NUMBER OF "ESTABLISHMENT" FIGURES, TECHNOCRATS, AND MILITANT, YOUNG, "SOCIALIST" NATIONALISTS

ALONG WITH HIM AS WELL AS TO MINIMIZE POTENTIAL OPPOSITION FROM OLD ARAB AND AFRICAN FRIENDS, PRESIDENT MUST MAKE COMMAND DECISION TO REORIENT NATIONS'S POLICY APPEAR TO BE MOVE-BY-MOVE, EVOLUTIONARY RESPONSE TO SHIFTING POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT CONFRONTING MAURITANIA. KOCHMAN DECLARED FUNDAMENTAL REDIRECTION OF GIRM OUTLOOK AND POLICY WOULD THUS BECOME APPARENT ONLY OVER TIME IN FORM OF SERIES OF SPECIFIC ACTIONS. HE COUNSELED ME TO SEARCH OUT TREND LINE OVER NEXT FEW MONTHS.

4. DO RECENT GIRM ACTIONS AND DECLARATIONS CONSTITUTE SERIES OF RANDOM DECISIONS OR DO THEY BEGIN TO FORM A CURVE? LET'S LOOK: SK-- PROMPT DECLARATION BY FOREIGN MINISTRY OF GIRM'S

READINESS TO PAY COST OF REPAIRING POLISARIO DAMAGE TO RESIDENCE AND COMPOUND;

-- KOCHMAN'S STATEMENT TO DEPUTY SECRETARY JUNE 16 THAT GIRM INTENDS TO ACCELERATE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF MAURITANIA AND THAT PRESIDENT INTENDS TO STRENGTHEN RELATIONS WITH US (REF A);

-- KOCHMAN'S STATEMENT TO AF/W JUNE 25 THAT MAURITANIA IS PRIMED TO ENTER "NEW STAGE" IN ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH US (REF B);

-- PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH'S SPECIAL MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT FORD ON ALGERIAN/POLISARIO TROUBLEMAKING;

-- KOCHMAN'S DECLARATION TO AF ASST. SECY. JULY 2 THAT MAURITANIA DESIRES STRENGTHENED COOPERATION WITH US PARTICULARLY IN DEVELOPMENT FIELD (REF C);

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PAGE 04 NOUAKC 01751 01 OF 02 221625Z

-- APPEARANCE OF FOUR OF EIGHT MEMBERS OF BUREAU POLPIC-UE NATIONAL/MINISTERS OF STATE AT MISSION'S BICENTENNIAL RECEPTION (OF REMAINING FOUR, THREE WERE OUT OF TOWN AND FOURTH WAS ACTING PRESIDENT);

-- STINGING DEFEAT (27-2) OF MAURITANIAN/MOROCCAN SAHARA STANCE AT OAU FOREIGN MINISTERS CONFERENCE;

-- MEMBERS OF GIRM OAU DELEGATION AND PRESIDENT'S PERSONAL STAFF RETURNING ON PRESIDENTIAL JET FROM MAURITIUS VIA ZAIRE AS WELL AS ALL MINISTERS AND OTHER SENIOR OFFICIALS GATHERED AT AIRPORT TO WELCOME ARRIVING PRESIDENT JULY 8 FELL ALL OVER THEMSELVES GREETING US AMBASSADOR AND ASKING SOLITICIOUS QUESTIONS ABOUT HIS OFFICIAL AND PERSONAL HEALTH. CLEARLY THE WORD WAS OUT;

-- PUBLICATION IN FULL OF KOCHMAN AND FORD CREDENTIALS  
PRESENTATION REMARKS JULY 12 FRENCH CHAAB UNDER HEAD-  
LINE " MY COUNTRY WANTS TO REINFORCE TIES OF COOPERATION  
WITH YOUR GOVERNMENT" AND IN JULY 13 ARABIC CHAAB, AND  
BROADCAST OF COMPLETE FRENCH AND ARABIC TEXTS BY RADIO  
MAURITANIE;

-- ONE-DAY RESPONSE TO JULY 13 US REQUEST FOR ASSURANCES ON  
PROJECTED TRANSFER OF MAP EQUIPMENT;

-- FIRST INVITATION IN 15 MONTHS FROM FOREIGN MINISTER  
TO AMBASSADOR FOR DINNER AT HIS HOME JULY 12 ORGANIZED  
VERY RELAXED INFORMAL EVENING WITH NOUACK'S MINISTER  
OF STATE NATIONAL ECONOMY AND THEIR WIVES, AND MINISTER  
OF DEFENSE FULL STOP;

-- REPRISÉ OF FOREIGN MINISTER'S PROFESSORIAL POLITICAL  
SCIENCE LECTURE ABOUT SOVIET STRATEGIC EMPLACEMENT IN THE  
LENGTH OF WEST COAST OF AFRICA FROM ALGERIA THROUGH  
GUINEA AND CONGO-B TO ANGOLA (REF D);

-- FOREIGN MINISTER INFORMED AMBASSADOR LAST WEEK THAT  
GIRM HAS TAKEN GOVERNMENT-LEVEL DECISION TO MAKE MAJOR  
EFFORT TO ACCOMMODATE US FOREIGN POLICY GOALS, AND

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PAGE 05 NOUAKC 01751 01 OF 02 221625Z

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PAGE 01 NOUAKC 01751 02 OF 02 221611Z

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TRSE-00 PC-01 /118 W

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 NOUAKCHOTT 1751

HAS INSTRUCTED MAURITANIAN UN DELEGATION TO ABSTAIN ON ALL THIRD WORLD ISSUES WHICH DIRECTLY AFFECT IMPORTANT US INTERESTS, SPECIFICALLY, UN DELEGATION IS TO ABSTAIN FORMALLY ON GUAM AND PUERTO RICO AND TO "REMAIN IN BACKGROUND" ON KOREA (SEE REF E FOR DETAILED REPORT).

5. SERIES OF DISCRETE POINTS ENUMERATED ABOVE DO INDEED SEEM TO DEFINE NEW AND DIFFERENT CURVE. MOREOVER, REPORTED COMMAND DECISION WHICH THEY PERHAPS TRACE OUT WAS FORESHADOWED LATE IN JANUARY (AT TIME COMMAND DECISION WAS PRESUMABLY IN THE WORKS) BY GIRM'S ANXIOUS REACTION TO SOVIET INTERVENTION AND MPLA'S "VICTORY" IN ANGOLA (PWSAS 3 AND 5 REF D). WE THOUGHT THEN THAT STRIKING SHIFT IN GIRM VIEW OF AFRICA AND CONCERN ABOUT SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 NOUAKC 01751 02 OF 02 221611Z

ITS IMMEDIATE INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT MIGHT REPRESENT "BEGINNINGS OF THE POLITICAL MATURATION OF AN IDEALISTIC THIRD WORLD LEADERSHIP GROUP WHICH HAS BEEN FORCED... TO FACE UP TO AND GRAPPLE WITH THE UNPLEASANT POLITICAL REALITIES OF THIS WORLD".

6. BUT LET'S NOT RUSH TO JUDGEMENT. MUCH OF THE EVIDENCE COMES FROM ONE MAN. AND SO FAR, SENIOR MAURITANIANS HAVE BEEN MERELY TALKING A GOOD GAME. AS RESULT OF POLITICAL SHELLACKING GIRM TOOK ON SAHARA AT PORT LOUIS WHICH FOLLOWED ON HEELS OF MILITARY CLOSE CALL ON POLISARIO "INVASION" FIRST WEEK OF JUNE, GIRM LEADERSHIP IS RUNNING A BIT SCARED. THEY BADLY NEED A POWERFUL PROTECTOR, AND SEE US, QUITE OBJECTIVELY, AS ONLY

POSSIBLE CANDIDATE. IT BEHOOVES US TO GO SLOWLY, STEP-BY-STEP TOO--AT THE VERY LEAST UNTIL GIRM DEMONSTRATES PUBLICLY AT NAM CONFERENCE AND AT UNGA THAT IT INTENDS TO PLAY AS WELL AS TALK A GOOD GAME.

HANDYSIDE

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## Message Attributes

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**To:** STATE  
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